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TAGS: [PREL](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE INITIATIVE: EU-US-RUSSIA TRILATERAL

Classified By: Ambassador William J. Burns: 1.4 (b, d).

¶1. (C) During a February 13 conversation with the Ambassador, Portuguese Ambassador Curto previewed a Portuguese initiative, as incoming President of the European Union in July 2007, to organize a trilateral EU-US-Russian summit. Curto explained that the Portuguese government was interested in resurrecting the trilateral format, which he said had been used during a previous Portuguese EU Presidency in 2000. The EU-Russian Summit is scheduled for October 25-26 and it would be "natural" for a trilateral to follow; while the GOP was flexible on the timing of the gathering, Curto stressed that the government placed a high priority on it taking place in Portugal, during Portugal's EU Presidency.

¶2. (C) Curto explained that the Portuguese broached the idea informally with FM Lavrov during his fall 2006 visit to Lisbon, who took it under consideration and with the knowledge that the U.S. had not yet been approached. The GOR subsequently endorsed the summit "in principle," and suggested that an agenda might include: nuclear nonproliferation/civilian nuclear energy, Iran, Middle East peace process, energy (writ large), civil society and people-to-people contacts, and infectious diseases. Curto stressed that the GOP viewed the proposed trilateral as a useful arena to "anchor" Russia as it enters its political transition, and to reinforce common US-EU concerns. Curto did not indicate the level of buy-in to the proposal, but asserted that Chancellor Merkel was supportive.

¶3. (C) Curto flagged that the GOP would soon approach Embassy Lisbon and the Department seeking a formal U.S. reaction.
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